

Saint Mary's Newsletter: December

Vicar: David Smithson 027 4213200 Fridays

07 8492761 Afterhours

Peoples Warden: Sally-Ann Riddell 07 8243850

Vicars Warden: Roger Jennings 07 8243712



SERVICES FOR DECEMBER

Sunday 6th:

10:00am Advent 2 Family Communion.
Children's Church & Junior Youth

Refreshments - Trish Smithson

Sunday 13th:

10am Advent 3 Family Communion

Refreshments - Majella Heaton

Sunday 20th:

10am Advent 4 Family Communion
Children's Church and Junior Youth

Refreshments - Sally-Ann Riddell

Thursday 24th:

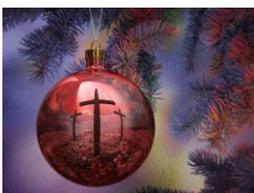
11pm Midnight Mass by candlelight

Friday 25th:

9:30am Christmas Day Communion

Dec 27th to Jan 31st:

NO SERVICES. Services resume Sun 7th
Feb 2016



Children's Church/Junior Youth:

This month -Children's church/Junior Youth is on 6th and the 20th Dec.

Youth Group (Year 9+): Combined churches youth Meet Fridays 7pm at Oaks Church Gordonton.

Parish Office Hours

The Parish Office (normally open Fridays 9:00am to 2:30pm) will be closed during January, and will re-open Fri 12 Feb

Some important Dates:

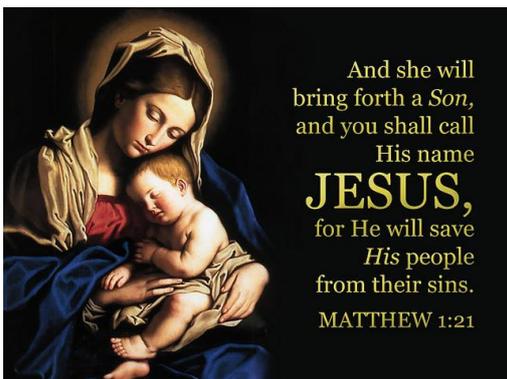
Sat 5th Dec: 7:30am set up for Christmas Fair which begins 9am

Sat 12th Dec: Church open to public to see our decorated church and a stall to sell any remaining crafts & preserves left over from the Christmas Fair

JANUARY 2016: Please note that there will be no services during the month of January. The Vicar can be contacted for *urgent* situations. Services will resume Sun 7st Feb 2016.

ADVENT: "O Come, O Come Emmanuel!" This familiar hymn reminds the church of the season of Advent, a time traditionally marked for remembering the years of preparation and consecration prior to the coming of the Messiah. For many centuries, the Church has identified the beginning of the Christmas celebration with a time of reflection and expectation called Advent. The word Advent means "coming" or "arrival" and, when used in conjunction with Christmas, reminds us of the anticipation and expectation held over hundreds of years by the people of Israel for their Messiah and promised King. For centuries before Christ, Hebrew rabbis methodically and passionately taught the Jewish people that Messiah was coming. They taught that the people should be ready to embrace their King when he appeared. They emphasized the need for holy living and obedience to God's law. This explains how the lowliest shepherds and fishermen of that day were acquainted with the promises of a Messiah. This season of preparation was all by God's design.

We mark Advent in the Christian church with the display of a wreath - its circle reminds us of God Himself, eternal and endlessly merciful. It is evergreen - reminding us of the hope of eternal life. The four outer candles represent the time of waiting and preparation for the Messiah during the four Sundays of Advent. The light of the candles reminds us of the Light of world, and the prophetic promise of His coming. The central candle of the Advent wreath, lighted at Christmas, reminds us of the fulfilment of His first Advent and the pure, humble means by which He came.



A Prayer for this month:

Lord, in this holy season of prayer and song and laughter, we praise you for the great wonders you have sent us: for shining star and angel's song, for infants cry in lowly manger. We praise you for the Word made flesh in a little Child. We behold his glory, and are bathed in his radiance.



This Month in Christian History:

Dec 2nd 1960: Archbishop of Canterbury Geoffrey Fisher meets with Pope John XXIII at the Vatican. This is the first meeting between the Anglican and Roman Catholic faiths since the founding of the Church of England in 1534



Parish Bank Account:

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Thanks for your weekly A/P contributions to keep our Parish running!